



## **U.S. Secretary Hillary Clinton receives kudos on the way out**

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Clinton steps down from her State Department post, having worked to rebuild relationships damaged by wars in Afghanistan and Iraq while pivoting U.S. assets to the Asia-Pacific. But she says the cause of her life is empowering women.

“It is just foolish to try and build a strong economy or a stable democracy while treating half the population as second class citizens at best, as some other species at worst,” she said. “And yet in too many places that is exactly how women are treated, they have few or no political rights, they are subjected to terrible violence, their health, even their lives are disregarded.” Human Rights Watch deputy Washington director Sarah Margon says Clinton put women’s rights at the center of foreign policy.

“Her willingness and, in fact, eagerness to meet with civil society groups is a real indication that foreign policy is no longer just about government-to-government relations. It’s about engaging all kinds of groups,” said Margon.

In sub-Saharan Africa, Center for Strategic and International Studies analyst Jennifer Cooke says Clinton pushed for accountability for abuses against women in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

“She leaves a strong legacy of diplomacy whether it’s in Kenya, whether it’s in Cote d’Ivoire, whether it’s in Senegal, tackling these big issues in DRC,” Cooke said.

But Clinton also has detractors. In the case of Syria, she has been criticized for not doing enough to help opponents of President Bashar al-Assad.

And she has drawn criticism for security failures in Libya — at the U.S. mission in Benghazi where four Americans were killed in a terrorist attack last September.

“Certainly, the loss of American lives in Benghazi was something that I deeply regret and am working hard to make sure we do everything we can to prevent,” Clinton said. “When you do these jobs, you have to understand at the very beginning that you can’t control everything.”

On balance, says Cato Institute analyst Malou Innocent, Clinton’s time at the State Department will be an asset if she makes a second run for president.

“Certainly as foreign policy wonks in Washington D.C. we can sort of dissect here and there, but for the majority of the American people they are going to look at her resume, which has been stunning. So certainly that will help her in 2016,” Innocent said.

Having lost her party's nomination in 2008, Clinton says she is not thinking about running again.

"It is up to me to make a decision on my own future," Clinton said. "I right now am not inclined to do that, but I will do everything I can to make sure that women compete at the highest levels not only in the United States, but around the world."

Clinton jokes that the first thing she will do after she leaves Washington is catch up on 20 years of sleep deprivation.