

CHUCK CASCIO – WELCOMING REMARKS
Diplomatic Seminar – May 6, 2009

Good morning.

On behalf of the Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and Educational Testing Service, I welcome you to today's seminar.

Joining me are John Hamre, president and CEO of CSIS, Carola McGiffert, Vice President of CSIS, and Michael McCarry, Executive Director of the Alliance. Carola and Michael were part of the planning committee for the seminar, along with Chuck Melley and Frank Gómez of ETS, and Ronna Freiberg, consultant to ETS on international education issues. Thanks to all of you for your initiative in putting this seminar together.

Why us? The Alliance represents the most important organizations in the United States that manage all types of educational, professional and youth exchange programs. And CSIS convened noted leaders in diplomacy, military affairs, education, the private sector and other fields as a "Smart Power Commission" that issued a major and very influential report in 2007. Finally, ETS, a nonprofit organization, is the world's largest educational research and assessment company. Its work helps shape the education and careers of people around the world.

The Smart Power Commission focused on five critical areas to revive American leadership around the world. Today, we will focus on one of them, public diplomacy, and particularly, building long-term, people-to-people relationships, especially among youth. Specifically, the Commission recommended:

1. Expanding successful exchange and education programs
2. Launching the U.S.-China and U.S.-India Educational Funds, a proposal for a ten-year allocation of funds to develop country specialists in China, India and the U.S. It would be administered by the Fulbright program.
3. Expanding Middle East language competencies
4. Drawing on American cultural advantages, including immigrant communities

Our decision to come together to explore trends in international education and exchanges responds to these key factors:

- First, our shared view that these activities make a unique contribution to U.S. national security and to shared success with our friends and allies, and that there should be more such programs and resources to fund them
- Second, the beginning of a new administration and its efforts to adopt a 'smart power' approach to diplomacy and foreign policy

- Third, the recommendations of the CSIS Smart Power Commission.

We meet at a time of global economic troubles, of conflicts old and new, and of unresolved, longstanding bilateral and multilateral issues that engage world leaders.

President Obama has said:

"We've got a unique opportunity to reboot America's image around the world. We need to take advantage of that. We will be at the same time unrelenting in our desire to create a relationship of mutual respect and partnership with countries and peoples of goodwill who want their citizens and ours to prosper together. And I think the world is ready for that message."

Our goal today is to provide useful, and perhaps provocative, perspectives on emerging Obama Administration policies on exchanges and international education. We are fortunate to have a group of speakers, including 8 members of the Smart Power Commission, who together comprise an extraordinary collection of talent and expertise. We are most grateful to them for giving their time to share their valuable insights.

We have a change in the 2:45 pm session. Joining Ambassador Thomas Pickering as panelists in a discussion of the future of public diplomacy will be:

- Goli Ameri, former Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and
- Anne Witkowsky, Senior Associate in the CSIS Homeland Security Program, and head of the Embassy of the Future project

Moderating the panel will be Ronna Freiberg, Senior Vice President of Legislative Strategies, Inc. and an expert on educational and cultural exchange.

Their biographies are included in your seminar agenda.

Our goal is to stimulate an exchange of views between our presenters and you. So our agenda allows for questions and answers and for networking at lunch and during the closing reception. The seminar is being recorded and – with your help – we hope to formulate some conclusions to share with you later.

Your seminar program has brief biographies of each presenter, so we will not make lengthy introductions. Also, must finish our morning session by 11:45. So, I wish you a very productive day. It is now my pleasure to introduce the moderator of our first session, Rick Barton of CSIS and a member of the Smart Power Commission. Thank you.