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Embajada de EE.UU., Bogotá D.C., Colombia

BARACK OBAMA AND HIS CABINET

Choices show president-elect's commitment to economy, security, science

Enero 20 de 2009

Barack Obama began 2008 in the wintry state of Iowa with sixteen others vying for the presidency. His win in the state's January 3 caucuses was the first of many propelling him to the White House.

As the year comes to a close, Obama already has taken numerous steps to prepare for his presidency, which begins January 20.

Top priorities for the new president will be the economy and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. But there are many other important domestic and international concerns.

Immediately following his election, Obama began naming and meeting with advisers who will help guide him on these tough issues. These primary presidential advisers, most of whom carry the title "secretary," will oversee some of the most important departments of the U.S. government, including the departments of State, Defense and Treasury.

Most of these advisers, including all Cabinet members, will have to be formally nominated by Obama once he becomes president and confirmed by the Senate. Obama has announced his selections much sooner than did most of his predecessors. To help new Cabinet members familiarize themselves with their respective government agencies, the Obama transition team has established agency review teams that will complete a thorough review of more than a hundred departments and agencies.

ECONOMIC TEAM

With the economy to be a top concern early in his presidency, Obama's first post-election announcements focused on members of his economic team. Among them will be

Timothy Geithner as secretary of the treasury, pending confirmation.

In turning to Geithner to oversee the financial security of the United States in a time of turmoil, Obama chose a treasury secretary who has already been closely involved with many of the key decisions in the Bush administration's response to the crisis. As head of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, Geithner has been the Federal Reserve's main liaison with Wall Street. The Federal Reserve is the U.S. central bank.



Calling for fresh ideas and perspectives on the U.S. economic situation, President-elect Obama also created the President's Economic Recovery Advisory Board to provide outside expertise and advice. The board will be chaired by former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker, and its chief economist and staff director will be Austan Goolsbee, a professor of economics at the University of Chicago.

NATIONAL SECURITY TEAM

Obama's national security team will feature some familiar faces, among them Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Secretary of State-designate Hillary Clinton.

Obama asked current Secretary of Defense Gates, who helped shape U.S. efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, to remain in his post. Obama said Gates and the U.S. military will be asked to responsibly end the war in Iraq "through a successful transition to Iraqi control," and to "ensure that we have the strategy — and resources — to succeed against al-Qaida and the Taliban."

New York Senator Clinton was Obama's principal rival for



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the Democratic presidential nomination, then campaigned on his behalf after he became the party's nominee. She was first lady of the United States between 1993 and 2001.

If confirmed, Clinton would be Obama's chief foreign policy adviser as well as the top diplomat representing the United States on the world stage. Clinton would manage the 260 embassies, consulates and other U.S. posts in 188 countries as well as oversee U.S. international assistance programs.

"Hillary's appointment is a sign to friend and foe of the seriousness of my commitment to renew American diplomacy and restore our alliances," Obama said. "There is much to do — from preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to Iran and North Korea, to seeking a lasting peace between Israel and the Palestinians, to strengthening international institutions."

Obama also announced Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano as his choice for secretary of homeland security, former Marine Corps General James Jones as his national security adviser and Susan Rice as the next U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

OTHER ADVISERS



During the transition, Obama has stressed his commitment to science, technology and curbing climate change.

Among those who will lead the way on scientific and climate issues is Secretary of Energy-designate Steven Chu, a Nobel Prize-winning physicist. Other scientists

will play a role in numerous Obama administration offices.

The incoming president's Cabinet picks are diverse. They

include two Republicans, five women, three Hispanics, three African Americans, two Asian Americans and an Arab American.

Obama will begin 2009 in a much warmer place than Washington: Hawaii. The Obama family has been spending their holidays in the president-elect's birth state.

<http://www.america.gov/st/elections08-english/2008/December/20081230114759hmnietua0.4913294.html>

EL FUTURO GABINETE

President



Obama, the first African-American presidential candidate to win the nomination of a major U.S. political party, brings a life story unlike that of any previous nominee. The biracial son of a Kenyan father and a white mother from the American heartland, Obama shot to national prominence with his well-received keynote speech at the Democratic National Convention in 2004,

the same year he was elected to the U.S. Senate from the state of Illinois. Just four years later, he rose to the top of a field crowded with Democratic heavyweights to clinch his party's nomination for the White House. With a polished speaking style, a command of eloquent and uplifting rhetoric, the ability to inspire the enthusiasm of young voters, and the sophisticated use of the Internet as a campaign tool, Obama is very much a 21st-century candidate. Yet he has demonstrated the timeless skills common to all campaigns, including the ability to effectively wage old-fashioned political trench warfare as he ground through a long and sometimes divisive five-month primary season to defeat his chief opponent, Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton. In his campaign, Obama stressed two overarching themes:



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changing Washington's traditional way of conducting the nation's business and invoking Americans of diverse ideological, social, and racial backgrounds to unite for the common good.

Vice-President



Joe Biden is a six-term senator from Delaware. First elected to the Senate in 1972 at age 29, Biden currently is the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, which reviews matters related to foreign policy including treaties, national security initiatives and humanitarian assistance.

He ran for president in 2008, but withdrew from the race shortly after the Iowa caucuses.

Biden was born November 20, 1942 in Scranton, Pennsylvania. He attended the University of Delaware and Syracuse Law School in New York. Prior to his senate career, Biden worked as an attorney. Biden and his wife Jill, a professor, have three children and five grandchildren.

State Department

Secretary of State-designate Hillary Rodham Clinton

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton was selected by President-elect Barack Obama to be the 67th secretary of state on December 1. Clinton has been a senator from New York since 2001 and was previously first lady of the United States from 1993 to 2001. Prior to public service, she worked as a lawyer and with her husband Bill Clinton in his campaigns for president and governor of Arkansas.



Treasury

Secretary of Treasury-designate Timothy F. Geithner

Timothy F. Geithner was nominated by President-elect Barack Obama to be the 75th secretary of the treasury. Before his nomination, Geithner was the head of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. He also served as assistant secretary of the treasury for international affairs during the Clinton administration from 1998 to 2001.



Defense

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates

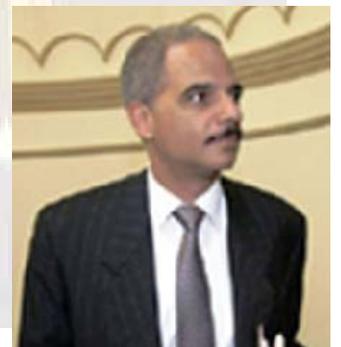


Robert M. Gates was sworn in on December 18, 2006, as the 22nd secretary of defense and was asked by President-elect Barack Obama to continue his service on December 1. Before entering his present post, Secretary Gates was the president of Texas A&M University, the nation's seventh largest university. He also has served as the director of the Central Intelligence Agency and was a member of the National Security Council.

Justice

Attorney General-designate Eric Holder

Eric Himpton Holder Jr. was nominated by President-elect Barack Obama December 1 to be the 82nd U.S. attorney general. Holder served as deputy attorney general from 1997 to 2001 during the Clinton administration, and previously served as the U.S. attorney for the District of





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Columbia and an associate judge on the District of Columbia Superior Court.

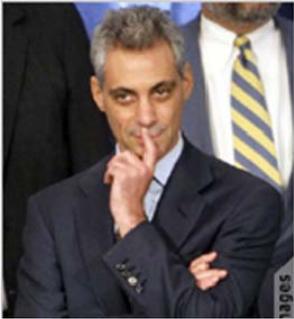
Homeland Security

Secretary of Homeland Security-designate Janet Napolitano

Janet Napolitano was selected by President-elect Barack Obama to be the third secretary of homeland security on December 1. Napolitano has been the governor of Arizona since 2003, and was Arizona's attorney general from 1999 to 2003.



White House Chief of Staff



Rahm Emanuel, whose selection was announced November 6, 2008, was the first appointment made to the Obama administration. "I announce this appointment first because the chief of staff is central to the ability of a president and administration to accomplish an agenda," President-elect Obama said in announcing the appointment. Emanuel, a Chicago native, served as a senior adviser to President Bill Clinton and represented the Illinois 5th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives 2002-2008.

Management and Budget

Office of Management and Budget Director-designate Peter R. Orszag

Peter R. Orszag was selected by President-elect Barack Obama to be the 37th director of the Office of Management and Budget. Before his selection, Orszag was director of the U.S. Congressional Budget Office. During the Clinton administration, he was special assistant to the president for eco-



nomics policy and senior economic adviser at the National Economic Council.

National Security

Retired General James Logan Jones Jr.

was selected by President-elect Barack Obama to be the 21st national security advisor on December 1. Jones was Supreme Allied Commander for Europe (SACEUR) and served as the 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps before his retirement from the Marines in 2007. The special assistant to the president for national security affairs, commonly referred to as the national security advisor, serves on the National Security Council (NSC) and is supported by a staff that produces research, briefings and intelligence to present to the NSC and the president. The national security advisor is appointed by the president without Senate confirmation and is independent from the departments of State and Defense.



Susan Rice Ambassador to the United Nations



A former Rhodes Scholar, Rice was a senior foreign policy adviser to Obama during his campaign and is a member of the Obama-Biden Transition Project's advisory board. In the Clinton administration, she was assistant secretary of state for African affairs between 1997 and 2001, and served on the National Security Council between 1993 and 1997.

Director of White House Military Office

Louis Caldera has had a distinguished 30-year career as a soldier, lawyer, legislator, high ranking government official, university president and professor of law. In 1992, Caldera was elected to the California State Assembly, and later



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University of New Mexico, after which he joined the faculty of the UNM School of Law as a tenured professor. Caldera is a member of the Board of Trustees of Claremont McKenna College and of The National World War II Museum, and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Health and Human Services

Secretary-designate Tom Daschle

Tom Daschle was selected by President-elect Barack Obama December 11 to be the 21st secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, if confirmed by the Senate. Daschle served as a U.S. senator representing South Dakota from 1987 to 2004 and currently leads a health care working group for the Obama transition team. Obama also asked Daschle to serve as director of a new White House office on health policy.



Energy



Secretary-designate Steven Chu

Steven Chu was selected by President-elect Barack Obama December 15 to be the next secretary of the Department of Energy, if confirmed by the Senate. Chu is cur-

rently the head of the Berkeley National Laboratory and is a specialist in carbon-neutral energy sources. He also won the 1997 Nobel Prize in physics.

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Veterans Affairs

Secretary-designate Eric Shinseki

General Eric Shinseki was selected by President-elect Barack Obama December 7 to be the next secretary of veterans affairs. A former U.S. Army chief of staff, Shinseki is the first Asian American to reach the rank of four-star general. During his 40-year Army career, Shinseki served two combat tours in Vietnam, where he was wounded in action.



Environmental Protection

Administrator-designate Lisa Jackson



Lisa Jackson was selected by President-elect Barack Obama on December 15 to be the next administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; she must be confirmed by the Senate. Jackson oversaw New Jersey's environmental protection office and currently serves as the chief of staff to the state's governor.

Jackson is also a chemical engineer.

Housing and Urban Development

Finding solutions to this urgent issue will require fresh, bold thinking. To that end, the President-elect has selected Shaun Donovan to be his Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.



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Mr. Donovan, a former Commissioner of Housing Preservation and Development in New York City, will come to Washington with the innovative ideas and new perspective needed to help the thousands of hard-working American families whose livelihoods have been threatened during this tough economic time.



Department of Natural Resources. Salazar is also a rancher and farmer.

Agriculture

Secretary-designate Tom Vilsack



Tom Vilsack was selected by President-elect Barack Obama December 17 to be the 30th secretary of the Department of Agriculture. His nomination will require Senate confirmation in 2009. Vilsack is the former governor of Iowa and previously served as a state senator and mayor.

Education

Secretary-designate Arne Duncan



Arne Duncan was selected by President-elect Barack Obama on December 16 to be the next secretary of the Department of Education; he must be confirmed by the Senate. Duncan is currently the head of the Chicago public school system — the third largest in the country. He previously ran an educational institute in Chicago. Prior to that, Duncan

played professional basketball in Australia.

Labor

Secretary-designate Hilda Solis

Hilda Solis was selected by President-elect Barack Obama on December 19 to be the next secretary of labor; she must be confirmed by the Senate. She previously served in the California Assembly and State Senate, where she was California's first female Hispanic state senator



Interior

Secretary-designate Ken Salazar

Ken Salazar was selected by President-elect Barack Obama December 17 to be the next secretary of the Department of the Interior. His nomination will require confirmation by the Senate in 2009. Salazar is currently a U.S. senator representing Colorado and previously served as the state's attorney general and head of its



Transportation

Secretary-designate Ray LaHood



Ray LaHood was selected by President-elect Barack Obama on December 19 to be the next secretary of transportation; he must be confirmed by the Senate. LaHood, a Republican, currently is a representative from the state of Illinois in the U.S. House of Representatives. He has served in the Illinois legislature and worked as an intermediate-school teacher.



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U.S. Trade Representative

Representative-designate Ron Kirk



Ron Kirk was selected by President-elect Barack Obama on December 19 to be the next U.S. Trade Representative. His nomination will require Senate confirmation in 2009. Kirk currently works as an attorney and served two terms as mayor of Dallas.

<http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/cabinet.html>



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THE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION January 20, 2009

OVERVIEW OF THE TRANSITION



The Presidential Transition Project is the enormous effort of hundreds of people coming together to lay out the agenda and priorities for the Obama Administration. Led by President-Elect Barack Obama, Vice-President Elect Joe Biden, a transition advisory board, and respected leaders from both, the public and private sector, the transition is responsible for ensuring that the transfer of power from the current administration to the Obama Administration is smooth and that the continuity of leadership is preserved.

The Transition Project is also tasked with reviewing hundreds of agencies and programs in the federal government and selecting new personnel to manage these important offices. Among the personnel that will be selected will be new Cabinet members, national security and federal law enforcement officials, non-career appointments, and other heads of agencies across the Executive Branch.

We will keep this transition process transparent, so that you will know which officials are being selected to serve in this administration and lead the country for the next four years. All staff appointments chosen for this administration will be committed to fulfilling Obama's campaign promises, to rebuilding our government, and to serving the American people again.

<http://change.gov/learn/transition>

OVERVIEW OF THE INAUGURATION



The presidential inauguration is the official day that the President of the United States is sworn into office. The purpose of this inauguration is to honor the incoming president with formal ceremonies, including: a Presidential Swearing-in Ceremony, an Inaugural Address, and an Inaugural Parade.

The inauguration will take place on January 20, 2009 in Washington D.C. on the steps of the United States Capitol. President-elect Barack Obama will take the oath of office, which states the following:

"I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Vice President-elect Joe Biden will have already taken a similar oath.

The Presidential Inaugural Committee is in charge of planning and executing the inauguration of our 44th president, Barack Obama.

<http://change.gov/learn/inauguration>