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UN's Albright speaks at SIPA

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Permanent U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations (UN) Madeleine Albright spoke about the need for continued U.S. support for and reform of the UN at the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) Thursday, as a part of the school's UN Day program.

Albright, who has been mentioned as a possible candidate to replace current Secretary of State Warren Christopher should President Clinton win re-election, made her comments during a critical time for the UN, which is in the process of deciding whether to replace current UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. President Clinton and Congression-

al Republicans have made no secret of their disappointment with the slow pace of fiscal reform at the UN, which they attribute to Boutros-Ghali.

According to Albright, the U.S., which owes the UN \$950 million in back dues and expenses as of Sept. 20, has pushed the current UN leadership to reform and revitalize the world governing body, and to make better use of its mandate.

"We have instituted new procedures at the Security Council to see that the UN does not undertake peacekeeping missions it cannot perform. And we have made clear our desire for new UN leadership," Albright said in her speech.

Albright outlined several recent UN successes, including the recent treaty to ban nuclear tests and to prevent new nations from developing nuclear bombs. She added that the world body has also made significant progress in working with public and private organizations to fight diseases such as small pox, polio, and HIV and AIDS.

“Now, there are still some who would scoff at these arguments, and who would say that our leadership within a reformed and revitalized UN does not matter. The evidence is overwhelming, however, that it does matter,” Albright said.

Albright also described the way in which American citizens' views of the UN have changed since its foundation in 1945. Just after World War II, American support for entering a world organization jumped from 26 percent to 87 percent. After the fall of Hitler, however, “many Americans were indeed disillusioned, for they found the burdens of World War II replaced almost immediately by new burdens,” such as the beginning of the Cold War and the spread of Communism, Albright said.

Acacia Shields, SIPA '97, said she thought Albright's speech was effective in serving its purpose. “Albright did a really good job of reducing the significance of anti-UN sentiment in the U.S., especially in anti-UN militias and in Congress,” Shields said.