

REMARKS BY VIVIEN STEWART BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE TO REVIEW TITLE VI AND FULBRIGHT HAYS

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My name is Vivien Stewart. I am Vice President for Education at Asia Society, a non-profit organization founded by John D. Rockefeller 3rd fifty years ago to promote greater understanding of Asia and the Pacific region. I am also Executive Director of the National Coalition on International Studies in the Schools, a Coalition chaired by former governors John Engler of Michigan and James B. Hunt Jr of North Carolina that includes the heads of many national K-12 education associations, as well as area and international relations experts and scholars, and media leaders. It was formed in 2002 to stimulate attention by educators to the international knowledge gap revealed by Asia Society's report, *Asia in the Schools: Preparing Young Americans for Today's Interconnected World*.

Members of the Coalition including the Business Roundtable, Committee for Economic Development, Council of Chief State School Officers, Education Commission of the States, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Conference of State Legislatures, and National Governors Association have together organized several States Institute on International Education in the Schools. Thirty-five states have sent teams to one or more of these Institutes to begin to address the challenge of how to develop an internationally competent workforce. (See Appendix A for examples of state activities)

Asia Society also administers the Goldman Sachs Prizes for Excellence in International Education, is working with the Gate Foundation on the creation of a network of internationally themed urban high schools, has worked with the College Board on the creation of new AP

courses in Chinese and Japanese and has issued a report on *Building National Capacity in Chinese*. It is from these experiences that I will speak to the need for an expanded and reconceptualized role for Title VI and Fulbright Hays in light of the enormous global challenges we face.

In the few minutes available, I would like to make four points:

1. International knowledge and skills are no longer just for experts.

In the past, international transactions were the domain of diplomats and international policy and business experts. Federal investment through Title VI therefore focused on the development of experts and languages in higher education. Today, a converging set of economic, demographic, and national security trends mean that **all** of our young people will need to acquire some international knowledge and skills in order to be successful as workers and citizens.

- **Globalization is driving the demand for an internationally competent workforce.**

Already one in six US jobs is tied to international trade. The majority of future growth in many industries, large, medium and small, will be in overseas markets.

- **Access to good jobs will require these new skills.** Future careers in business, government, health care, law enforcement, and a wide variety of other jobs will all require greater international knowledge and skills. In this connection, it is important to note that minorities continue to be underrepresented in international careers and need to be exposed to international content before they go to college.

- **New national and human security challenges**, including terrorism, AIDS, and environmental degradation, also underscore the need for global knowledge. In particular, the President and the U.S. Secretaries of State, Defense, and Education have issued

strong calls to develop **higher levels of proficiency in a wider range of world languages so language learning will have to start earlier and be more effective.**

- **Increased diversity in our schools and workplaces** with increasing populations from many different parts of Asia, Latin America and Africa, requires a citizenry with increased understanding of other cultures.
- Finally, **international education needs to be a two-way street** both to address the tremendous misinformation about the US among young people in many parts of the world and to promote mutual understanding and problem solving.

Given these facts, it is not surprising that we are hearing increasing calls from the nation's governors, who will be discussing international education at their meeting later this month; from business leaders (see, for example the CED Report released last week, *Education for Global Leadership*), and from state boards of education and chief state school officers, who will be devoting their 2006 summer institute to the subject of international education, that we need to greatly increase the international content of our education system and ramp up foreign language competence to keep pace with the rapidly changing world. (See Appendix B for a list of publications related to the expansion of international education).

2. Our high school graduates and K-12 teachers know little about the world outside our borders. Other countries are investing more in international education.

We are very familiar with national government surveys and international comparisons of student achievement in math and science. But we do not ever measure students' international knowledge and language skills in a systematic way.

Surveys conducted by Asia Society in 2001 and National Geographic Society/Roper in 2002 found that:

- **Levels of student knowledge are rudimentary.** For example, 25% of **college-bound** high schools students could not even name the ocean between California and Asia. 80% did not know that India is the world's largest democracy. In fact, young Americans are next to last in their knowledge of geography and international affairs compared with students from eight other industrial countries.
- **Teachers are not prepared.** Most prospective teachers do not take any international courses and have very low participation rates in study abroad programs. In fact teacher preparation programs are the least internationalized part of universities.
- **Language instruction does not reflect today's realities.** Only half of all high school students study a year of a foreign language, and most of that is introductory Spanish. Fewer than 40,000 study Chinese, a language spoken by 1.3 billion people.

At the same time, other competitor countries are expanding their investments in international education. For example:

- **International Partnerships:** EU and China link schools and educators to counterparts around the world.
- **Technology:** South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan have master plans to put high-speed computers in schools to connect students to world knowledge.
- **Languages:** 50% of Europeans speak a second language fluently compared with 9% in the U.S. China teaches English from 3rd grade. 25% of Australian students learn an Asian language.

- **Study Abroad:** Less than 1% of U.S. students studied abroad in 2000, compared with 3% for France and China, 16% for Ireland and 30% for Singapore.

3. Our nation's major resource for building national capacity is the federal investment in area and international studies in higher education.

How are we to build the national capacity to meet this emerging policy priority?

The Higher Education Act contains both Title II, which promotes teacher quality and Title VI, which promotes the development of international expertise. There is a gap between these two titles. As currently constituted, neither title adequately addresses our critical need to build **teacher capacity** in international content and critical languages.

In the absence of significant attention from the teacher preparation programs of universities (both the arts and sciences and college of education components), the outreach activities of Title VI National Resource Centers are **the** major source of professional development workshops for teachers about Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and international affairs. Outreach activities of centers have also produced supplementary curriculum materials and have taken groups of teachers on study abroad.

These activities are **highly valued** by teachers but **far too few** have access to them.

These activities have been underfunded and, as currently structured, these outreach activities cannot build the kind of national capacity we need. Although every National Resource Center is required to undertake some outreach to schools, this is a low priority within the program (only 5 of a total of 150 points assigned to program proposals are for K-12 outreach). Budgets are tiny, staff is part-time and staff turnover often high. Moreover, National Resource Centers do not exist in every state and are not typically housed in the institutions that train the

majority of our nation's teachers so they have not been able to engage the nation's schools of education or the community colleges where one quarter of prospective teachers study for their first two years. Finally, they have not in the past found willing partners in states and school districts so that their work can systematically improve K-12 classrooms and have a measurable impact on student achievement.

4. Proposed: A K-16 Approach to International Education and World Languages

As in other critical areas of education like math and science, we need to take a K-16 approach to the development of international competence and world language proficiency. Let me take the example of Chinese.

This has been designated as one of the languages that are critical for the US economy and national security. There is huge interest among schools in offering Chinese language programs: when the College Board conducted a survey of how many schools wanted to offer its new AP in Chinese Language and Culture, 2,400 schools replied that they wanted to do so. There is also enormous interest among parents and the general public as shown in the 200 plus newspaper and television stories about Mandarin that have appeared in the past six months. However, as a nation we currently have almost no capacity to respond to this interest with programs. At a meeting of existing Chinese language programs designed to produce an introductory handbook for schools on establishing Chinese language programs, schools identified about 8-10 institutions around the country that currently train Chinese language teachers. An informal survey of these institutions revealed that they produce between two and four teachers per year. Schools do not start programs because they cannot find teachers; people do not go into training programs to become teachers because they do not see jobs.

Beyond the lack of teachers, there is a shortage of good materials, different approaches to the teaching of Chinese in schools and higher education, and a great need for professional development. To solve these problems and develop a supply of speakers of Chinese and other critical languages will require a K-16 approach and K-16 partnerships.

Although Title VI cannot solve all of the K-16 capacity needs alone, since this will require longer-term support from state and local levels, a catalytic initiative to stimulate national attention and to develop some strong models is most timely.

While this Committee must address a set of specific questions about the Title VI programs as they currently exist, I hope that the Committee can do what NAS committees on math and science have done—to lay out an overall K-16 strategy for how the nation needs to respond to the challenges of globalization.