RELEASE IN FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, July 06, 2009 1:49 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: PRESIDENT OBAMA on SECRETARY CLINTON

From: Toiv, Nora F
To: Mills, Cheryl D
Sent: Mon Jul 06 12:49:18 2009
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--PRESIDENT OBAMA on SECRETARY CLINTON, in a written pre-trip interview:

NOVAYA GAZETA, an opposition Moscow newspaper: 'In the course of your presidential campaign, you competed with Hillary Clinton. Does this hinder your joint work now?'

THE PRESIDENT: 'Absolutely not. This is the beauty of democracy. Secretary Clinton and I engaged in a hard-fought, very competitive race for the nomination of our party. By the way, without question, these primaries made me a better candidate for the general election against Senator John McCain. But in democracies, once the election is over, then all Americans who care about our country get back to work. It was because of how well I got to know Secretary Clinton during our campaign that I knew she would be such an excellent Secretary of State, and she has served our country with excellence.'

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