Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is on an extraordinary visit to Myanmar, and is the highest ranking U.S. official in more than 50 years to visit the nation. Clinton is pledging to help bring democracy to the changing nation.

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Secretary Clinton Pledges to Aid Democracy in Myanmar

MATT LAUER, co-host:
Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is on an extraordinary visit to Myanmar, and is pledging to help bring democracy there. NBC's Ian Williams has the latest on Clinton's trip. Ian, good morning to you.

IAN WILLIAMS, reporting:
Good morning, Matt, from the lakeside home of Aung San Suu Kyi. She's faced years of persecution as a result of her struggle for democracy but today played host to the secretary of state. A stroll in the garden of a house that has also been a prison for Suu Kyi for 15 of the last 21 years, during which she was kept here under house arrest, at times in almost total isolation. This meeting comes just a year after she was released. And they spoke of working together to hasten the pace of democratic change.

SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY CLINTON: We hold the dream that you have so long represented to many of us around the world. And we want to be a partner with you, with the new government, and with all people of good will.

WILLIAMS: Behind Myanmar's often stunning facade lies a grinding poverty, and they spoke of stepping up the assistance of the US and other international organizations to what has been a closed and secretive state. Suu Kyi said she was happy with the US engaging Burma.

AUNG SAN SUU KYI: This will be the beginning of a new future for all of us provided we can maintain it, and we hope to be able to do so. Thank you.

WILLIAMS: They appeared at ease together, and this seemed like a momentous moment for both of them. A short distance away from Suu Kyi's home we witnessed a scramble to distribute the day's newspapers. With censorship eased there is at least a story worth reading.

Unidentified Man: Good. Good, good.

WILLIAMS: For two decades Suu Kyi's lakeside home has been a symbol of resistance. Now, as
Myanmar begins to open up, it's more than ever a symbol of hope for a people hungry for change. Secretary Clinton is now on her way home, leaving a country at the beginning of a surprising reform process that's not only a challenge for Myanmar, but also for US policy in this region. Matt.

LAUER: All right, Ian Williams reporting for us. Ian, thank you very much.