Health diplomacy: Rx for peace

By Susan Blumenthal

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Just as diplomats have hammered out treaties over the centuries to build bridges between once-warring nations, public health officials and humanitarian organizations have begun sharing best practices and technology in an effort to build a new kind of bridge between countries to foster peace and development around the world.

Americans have only recently come to realize the importance of improved global health, in terms of preventing and treating both infectious and chronic diseases, and the need to act together to address these challenges. The emergence of new diseases such as tuberculosis and drug-resistant strains of influenza, as well as the increasing prevalence of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and cancer, highlight the urgent need for international cooperation.

In the 21st century, infectious disease is not only a threat to the United States but to the entire world. The spread of infectious diseases is a global problem, and the United States must take a leadership role in addressing it.

One of the most promising approaches to health diplomacy is the use of international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO). WHO has been instrumental in coordinating global health efforts and providing guidance and support to countries in need.

For example, the tuberculosis relief efforts in Indonesia: A policy that focuses on building bridges between the governments of the world and the private sector, utilizing the expertise of global health organizations, and promoting international cooperation is essential for achieving global health goals.

W e a re America to marshal fully its medical expertise, financial support and compassionate leadership to fight infectious and chronic diseases, just think what effect it would have on international opinion and on improving health and hope for people around the world.