

Study: Water supply will add to world's instability

By Renee Schoof, McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON – Floods and water shortages in the next 30 years will make it hard for many countries to keep up with growing demand for fresh water, particularly in South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, the U.S. intelligence community reported Thursday.

Water problems in the next decade will add to instability in countries that are important to U.S. national security, the report said. Floods and shortages also will make it hard for some countries to grow enough food or produce enough energy, creating risk for global food markets and slowing economic growth.

“I think it’s fair to say the intelligence community’s findings are sobering,” said Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, who requested the report last year. “These threats are real and they do raise serious security concerns.”

Clinton, speaking at an event to mark World Water Day, announced a new U.S. Water Partnership, made up of private companies, philanthropy and advocacy groups, academics and government. The group will coordinate efforts to solve water problems and make U.S. expertise more accessible.

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