

## Extra Feature Story

### **Obama Claims Democratic Nomination as Clinton Concedes**

June 9, 2008

**After one of the longest primary races in recent history, Senator Barack Obama won the support of enough delegates to claim the Democratic presidential nomination and his rival Senator Hillary Clinton suspended her campaign June 9.**

Senator Obama secured enough delegate votes to bring him to the coveted 2,118 required to secure the Democratic bid.

After she refused to drop out of the race on June 3, Clinton, under pressure from other Democrats, suspended her campaign and endorsed Obama during a speech at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C.

"I understand that we all know that this has been a tough fight, but the Democratic party is a family and now it's time to restore the ties that bind us together," she told cheering supporters.

#### **A tight and historic race**

Obama and Clinton fought what is considered the tightest Democratic primary race in the modern era, with each candidate appealing to distinct voter groups. Clinton appealed to many white, working-class voters, women and Latinos while Obama appealed to many new, young voters and African Americans.

Obama praised Clinton in his victory speech.

"She has made history not just because she's a woman who has done what no woman has done before, but because she is a leader who inspires millions of Americans with her strength, her courage and her commitment to the causes that brought us here tonight," he said.

In her concession speech, Hillary Clinton had words of encouragement for those who wanted her to be the first female president.

"You can be so proud that from now on it will be unremarkable for a woman to win primary-state victories," Clinton said. "The path will be a little easier next time... that has always been the history of progress."

"Although we weren't able to shatter that highest, hardest glass ceiling, thanks to you it's got about 18 million cracks in it and the light is shining through like never before," she said.

## **Uniting the Democratic Party**

Political analysts agree that Obama will need the support of Clinton to unite the Democratic Party following the long and divisive nomination run.

"If Senator Clinton goes out and actively campaigns for Barack Obama, especially in places like Ohio, Michigan and Florida, I think she can really help him there," Chris Cillizza of the WashingtonPost.com told the NewsHour.

"These voters who are with Senator Clinton have a lot more in common ideologically and values-wise with Senator Obama than they do with Senator McCain. And to remind them of that is a very powerful message."

## **A Republican challenger**

Obama used his speech Tuesday night as an opportunity to challenge Senator John McCain of Arizona, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee.

"There are many words to describe John McCain's attempt to pass off his embrace of George Bush's policies as bipartisan and new," Obama said. "But 'change' is not one of them."

Earlier in the evening, Senator McCain addressed a smaller crowd in Louisiana, outside New Orleans, stressing that he is the better, more experienced candidate for the presidency.

"He [Obama] is an impressive man, who makes a great first impression. But he hasn't been willing to make the tough calls, to challenge his party, to risk criticism from his supporters to bring real change to Washington. I have," McCain said.

**-- Compiled by Annie Schleicher for NewsHour Extra**

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