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### Front page story

# Obama's green jobs revolution

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**B**arack Obama is promising a \$150bn "Apollo project" to bring jobs and energy security to the US through a new alternative energy economy, if his final push for votes brings victory in the presidential election on Tuesday.

"That's going to be my number one priority when I get into office," Mr Obama has said of his "green recovery" plans. Making his arguments in a radio address yesterday, the Democratic favourite promised: "If you give me your vote on Tuesday, we won't just win this election. Together, we will change this country and change the world."

The election has come during the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, but he declared: "We'll invest \$15bn a year over the next decade in renewable energy, creating five million new green jobs that pay well, can't be outsourced and help end our dependence on foreign oil." The appeal of the idea that clean energy could help to kick-start the economy is such that Mr Obama's Republican opponent, John McCain, has also promised "millions" of green jobs if he wins.

In the mayhem of the election campaign, Mr Obama has yet to deliver a major speech about his renewable energy plans. But he has pledged to create five million new "green collar jobs", largely by greatly expanding the use of renewable energy, which should supply a tenth of America's electricity within four years, insulating a million homes a year and to put a million rechargeable "plug-in hybrid cars" on the road by 2015.

He also wants the US motor industry to take a lead in producing environmentally friendly vehicles rather than 4x4s. He promises to invest in clean engine technology, to increase America's hitherto lax car fuel economy standards by 4 per cent a year, and to boost sales of green cars by giving a \$7,000 tax credit to people who buy them. And he has pledged to convert the White House fleet to plug-in hybrids within a year of taking office.

There is growing acceptance from economists in the US that a Green "New Deal" should be a fundamental part of the solution to the financial crisis and to America's long-term security concerns.

At the same time, British ministers are planning a huge increase in environmentally friendly investment as a central part of its economic rescue plan. Japan's Prime Minister, Taro Aso, has called the green economy "a great opportunity for new growth". And plans are being laid in the Australian treasury for a 3,000 per cent growth in green jobs over the next decades.

But it is the American plans that could have the greatest effect in dragging the world economy out of crisis. Mr Obama believes that a new clean-energy economy "can be the engine that drives us into the future in the same way the computer was the engine for economic growth over the last couple of decades".

The head of Mr Obama's transition team, John Podesta, has called for "a new vision for the economic revitalisation of the nation and a restoration of America's leadership in the world", adding: "We must seize this precious opportunity to mobilise the country and the international community towards a brighter and more prosperous future."